DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 038 927 HE 001 489

AUTHOR Cope, Robert G.
TITLE Faculty Perceptions of Influence Relationships: A Situational Approach.
INSTITUTION American Educational Research Association, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 5 Mar 70
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Minneapolis, Minnesota, March 5, 1970

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.75
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Personnel, *Behavior Patterns, Decision Making, *Faculty, Higher Education, *Power Structure, *Stress Variables, *Teacher Administrator Relationship

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to examine the ways existing and preferred influence relationships differed in academic departments in two situations. A questionnaire examining perceived power relationships was sent to 131 randomly selected faculty members in 6 social science departments at a state university. Three of the departments were in a period of stress as a result of contested tenure decisions, turnover of chairmen, and protest resignations. Eighty four members of the departments or 65% returned usable questionnaires. Faculty in non-stress departments reported greater reliance on legitimate, expert and referent powers for both themselves and their chairmen; respondents in stress departments reported greater use of reward and coercive powers, i.e. positive and negative sanctions. When asked for their preference, both stress and non-stress faculty tended to select the legitimate, expert, and referent bases of power. When power preferences of the "locals" (off-campus reference group orientation), it was found that the "locals" perceived and favored the use of referent and legitimate power, while "cosmopolitans" perceived more emphasis on the use of rewards, and expert power. (Author/AF)

ED038927

Faculty Perceptions of Influence Relationships: A Situational Approach *

Abstract

Objective: *Since theory and research on social organizations has suggested the need to consider the characteristics of the group as well as the situation in which the group exists, the objective of this study was to examine the ways existing and preferred influence relationships differed in academic departments in two situations.*

Method: *A brief questionnaire examining perceived power relationships was sent to 131 randomly selected faculty members in six social science departments at a state university. Three of these departments were in a period of stress as a result of contested tenure decisions, turnover of chairmen, and protest resignations. The questionnaire assessed the present and preferred bases of chairmen and faculty influence (referent, expert, reward, coercive, and legitimate) between the stress and three comparable nonstress departments. The questionnaire also sought to type the respondent according to the categories of cosmopolitans and locals.*

Results: *After two reminders, eighty-four members of the departments returned usable questionnaires (65% response). Faculty in nonstress departments reported greater reliance on legitimate, expert and referent powers for both themselves and their chairmen; however, respondents in stress departments reported greater use of reward and coercive powers, i.e., positive and negative sanctions. When asked for their preference both stress and nonstress faculty tended to select the legitimate, expert, and referent bases of power.*

Different power preferences were found when the responses of "locals" (high institutional loyalty) were compared with "cosmopolitans" (off-campus reference group orientation): locals perceived and favored the use of referent and legitimate power, while cosmopolitans perceived more emphasis on the use of rewards, and expert power.

* A paper prepared for presentation and discussion on March 5, 1970, at the meeting of American Educational Research Association, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Comments are invited and should be directed to Robert G. Cope, Miller Hall, University of Washington, 98105.

HE 001 429

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Faculty Perceptions of Influence Relationships: A Situational Approach*

The study reported herein has two purposes. The first is to examine the general proposition that behavior may be situationally determined, particularly as it pertains to academic departments. A second purpose is to examine varieties of behavior that may be related to personality differences.

Research of this kind should tell us something about the possibilities of developing general theories of administration that are appropriate to different types of social organizations; for the purposes of academic administration, the research findings are meant to suggest the situational requirements of leadership.

Related Research

Not much is known about college faculty members. Except for some descriptive data and a few unvalidated theories about faculty behavior from a small number of well documented studies,[1] intuition and personal experience serve as points of reference. This is, therefore, an almost virgin area of resesearch; this is especially true when one is attempting to study faculty leadership behavior.

The study has been largely influenced by the taxonomy of French and Raven (1960) regarding the major bases of social power: (a) reward power, based on the perception that another person has the ability to mediate rewards; (b) coercive power, based upon the perception that another person has the ability to mediate negative sanctions; (c) legitimate power, based on the perception that another person has the legitimate right to prescribe behavior; (d) referent power, based upon one's identification (personal admiration) with another; and (e) expert power, based upon the perception that another person has special knowledge or expertness.[2] The terms "power" and influence" as used are interchangeable; their common definition is based upon the ability to induce another to act in accordance with one's intentions.

Related to the theory of major bases of social power is the study by Bachman (1968) in which 685 faculty members in twelve liberal arts

---

* I am grateful to H. Lloyd Keith of Shoreline Community College who critiqued an earlier draft and offered helpful suggestions, particularly in respect to the limitations of this study.

colleges indicated their perceptions of the power relationships existing between themselves and the college dean. Bachman reported that faculty members usually reported higher levels of satisfaction when their deans based their influence on expert and referent power rather than upon legitimate authority and coercion. A second study has also provided comparable data in the use of the five-part French and Raven interpersonal influence dimensions with academic departments: Parsons and Platt (1968) likewise reported that faculty in eight institutions perceived that the nature of the influence exchange was primarily based upon legitimate and expert powers.

In one of the systematic studies of university level faculties, Gouldner (1957, 1958) has described academic "cosmopolitans" and "locals" according to their reference group orientation. Cosmopolitans are those having an off-campus reference group loyality and orientation, while locals are seen as having a dominant career orientation toward the employing institution. A similar typing of faculty was used in this study.

Finally, another of the techniques employed was adopted from a study by Gross and Grambsch (1968), in which they examined both the actual (as is) and the preferred (should be) university goals among faculty in a national study of institutional goals and academic power. They found that while many faculty perceived certain goals as important (e.g. research) they tended to say that other goals should be given more emphasis (e.g. teaching).

This study, then, examines relationships among several dimensions: (1) actual and preferred bases of interpersonal influence by faculty members and chairmen, (2) in academic departments in two states (stress-nonstress), by (3) faculty members with two orientations.

Method

Measures

All data consist of faculty responses to questionnaire items. Only a part of the questionnaire data was analyzed for this presentation.

Actual and Preferred Bases of Influence: The following questionnaire item was used to asses five bases of perceived (as is) and preferred (should be) influence of the department chairman over the respondent; a similar set of items was used to measure faculty perceptions of their influence over the chairman (referent, expert, reward, coercive, and legitimate influence).

Listed below are five reasons generally given by faculty when they are asked why they do the things their chariman suggest or want them to do. Please read all five carefully. Then react to each reason in two different ways:

(1) First, number the reasons according to how it is.

(2) Then, number the reasons according to how you feel it should be.

Give rank "1" to the most important reason, "2" to the next etc.

/_/ I respect him personally, and want to act in a way that merits his respect and admiration. [Referent]

/_/ I respect his competence and judgment about things with which he is more experienced than I. [Expert]

/_/ He can give special help and benefits to those who cooperate with him. [Reward]

/_/ He can apply pressure or penalize those who do not cooperate. [Coercive]

/_/ He has a legitimate right, considering his position, to expect that his suggestions will be carried out. [Legitimate]

Because of the ranking procedure, the five bases of influence are not independent; any single basis of influence can be given a higher ranking only at the expense of another basis. The ranking procedure, however, has the advantage of forcing the respondent to discriminate among all the bases, rather than emphasing only one or two. Moreover, the tendency to rate the amount of influence rather than the nature of influence is avoided. Since the emphasis is on the nature of the interaction, the latter measure is preferred.

Faculty orientation: Because one of the purposes of the study was to see if one of the characteristics of the person influenced behavior, the following measure of the respondent's orientation was included:

Rank the three sources below according to the amount of intellectual stimulation you receive from each. Give rank "1" to the most important source, "2" to the next, "3" to the least.

/_/ colleagues here

/_/ other professional associates elsewhere

/_/ periodicals, books, and other publications

This item was used to assist in the identification of faculty members whose orientation and loyalities were more closely associated with the institution (locals, home guard) from those whose having an off-campus reference group orientation (cosmopolitans).

Stress: The measure of stress was impressionistic. Several academic departments in the social sciences were typed as "stress" departments based upon the knowledge of resignations in protest (eleven offered in one department, "Him or us"), contested tenure decisions, turnover of chairmen, the contested appointment of a chairman, and so on. Data were collected from faculty in comparable "nonstress" departments, also in the social sciences.

Procedure

The respondents were selected from a list of all faculty in the ranks of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, and instructor. From this list were omitted all names of those who were on sabattical or other leave and who were less than fulltime members of the staff. Further omissions included all associate deans, assistant deans, department heads, and those not substantially considered faculty (e.g., a counselor). This procedure left a potential sample population of 122 faculty in stress departments and 91 faculty in nonstress departments. It was arbitrarily decided to send questionnaires to about half of the population, selected randomly. ("Skip every other name.")

A total of 131 questionnaires were sent (April 1969) to eligible faculty members; after several weeks, during which time two follow-up letters were sent, a total of 84 usable questionnaires were returned (65% response). While a higher response rate would have been preferred, the final response was consistent with our expectations and comparable with that obtained in most studies involving faculty.[3]

Results

The major findings of the study are summarized in the Table along with comparable data obtained by Bachman (1968) and Parsons and Platt (1968). All means are based on the rank ordering of responses. Thus, a higher rank has a lower mean, i.e., a mean of 2.46 is a higher rank than a mean of 3.46.

Bases of Influence--Nonstress Departments:

Faculty in <u>nonstress</u> departments indicated similarities in their perceptions of the bases of influence employed by their chairmen and themselves; greater emphasis was placed upon the application of referent (personal admiration), expert and legitimate powers than on the use of either

Table

Bases of Influence: Means and Rank

Bases of Influence	Nonstress Departments								Bachman (1968)		Parsons & Platt (1968)	
	Cosmopolitan (N = 10)				Locals (N = 17)							
	As it is		Should be		As it is		Should be		As it is		As it is	
	CHM		FAC		CHM		FAC		CHM		FAC	
	Mn	R	Mn	R	Mn	R	Mn	R	Mn	R	Mn	R	Mn	R	Mn	R	Mn	R	Mn	R	DEAN N = 685 Mn	R	FAC Mn	R	CHM N = 400	FAC
Referent	1.90	(1)	2.20	(2-3)	1.90	(1-2)	1.70	(1)	1.94	(1)	2.23	(2)	1.64	(1)	2.00	(2)	2.48	(3)	2.85	(3)	(3)	(3)
Expert	2.00	(2)	2.20	(2-3)	2.70	(3)	1.90	(2)	3.11	(3)	2.47	(3)	3.05	(3)	2.94	(3)	1.94	(1)	1.93	(2)	(1)	(2)
Reward	4.20	(4)	3.60	(4)	4.30	(5)	3.90	(4)	3.88	(4)	3.58	(4)	4.11	(5)	3.52	(4)	3.67	(4)	3.66	(4)	(4-5)	(4)
Coercive	4.70	(5)	4.60	(5)	4.20	(4)	4.80	(5)	3.94	(5)	4.64	(5)	3.82	(4)	4.58	(5)	4.40	(5)	4.78	(5)	(4-5)	(5)
Legitimate	2.20	(3)	1.80	(1)	1.90	(1-2)	2.70	(3)	2.11	(2)	1.82	(1)	2.35	(2)	1.76	(1)	2.40	(2)	1.72	(1)	(2)	(1)
	Stress Departments																									
	N = 24								N = 20																	
Referent	3.45	(5)	3.33	(4)	3.04	(3)	2.87	(3)	3.15	(4)	2.18	(1)	2.05	(2)	2.15	(2)										
Expert	2.08	(1)	2.20	(1)	1.79	(1-2)	2.12	(2)	3.10	(3)	3.25	(4)	2.65	(3)	2.85	(3)										
Reward	3.20	(3)	3.00	(2)	3.91	(4)	4.08	(4)	3.70	(5)	3.65	(5)	3.95	(4)	4.15	(4)										
Coercive	2.95	(2)	2.87	(2)	4.45	(5)	4.37	(5)	3.00	(2)	3.05	(3)	4.40	(5)	4.25	(5)										
Legitimate	3.33	(4)	3.58	(5)	1.79	(1-2)	1.54	(1)	2.05	(1)	2.75	(2)	1.95	(1)	1.60	(1)										

positive (reward power) or negative (coercive power) sanctions.

A comparison can be made with the means and rank ordering of bases of influence reported by Bachman (1968). His findings are largely similar to these results except for more emphasis upon the use of expert power ("I respect his competence and judgment about things with which he is more experienced than I"), especially on the part of chairmen. Data from Parsons and Platt (1968) were reported without mean scores, the rank ordering is, however, identical to Bachman (1968).

Bases of Influence--Stress Departments:

Respondents from stress departments, however, indicate a picture that is substantially different They percieve that more emphasis is placed upon the use of expert, reward, and coercive influence; however, when indicating their preference there is a marked similarity of choice of powers to both the practice ("as it is") and the preferences ("should be") as found in the nonstress departments.

Another difference comparing the stress and nonstress departments may be significant: the proportion of cosmopolitans in nonstress departments is about a third (N = 10), whereas over half (N = 24) of the respondents from stress departments appear to have this orientation. Cosmopolitans especially in stress departments, appear to place more reliance on the use of expert and reward powers than their colleagues in other situations.

Discussion

As in much of the research of the social sciences, it has been necessary to measure behavior solely in terms of perceptions. Such a procedure may be criticized because what appears to be a relationship may only be a "phenomenological" effect. It is suspected, for instance, that the "as it is" values obtained for the stress departments may reflect the perceptions of faculty members in two camps: in power-out of power, or favored or not favored by their chairman; where a faculty member is on good terms with a chairman he may then perceive that the chairman is using referent and expert forms of influence, which may be quite different from actual behavior. These findings, thus, may not be representing objective conditions, but may merely be perceptions. A way to test the objectivity of these perceptions would be to use a partial correlation between the bases of influence and a measure of satisfaction with the chairman (none was used in this study). The partial correlation (holding satisfaction constant) rules out the portion of the relationship which might be, attributed to "phenomenological" or "halo" effects.[4]

In addition to the phenomenological effect, although it was attempted, the power bases are not mutually exclusive; thus, one can never be sure that when respondents A and B perceive the same base of influence that A will not call it "expert" and B will call it "legitimate." For example, a chairman's recommendation on tenure might be considered legitimate (he has the "right" to make the decision), expert (experienced and competent), or coercive (the S.O.B.), depending upon the perception of the respondent. A difference, therefore, may result when there is not any difference.

The higher proportion of faculty that have been typed as cosmopolitans in the stress departments suggests, as often noted among those institutions seeking full university status (especially former state colleges), that there may be a point at which the mixture becomes volatile.

Aside from finding a higher proportion of cosmopolitans in the stress departments, there seems to be little else that differentiates them from other faculty. One exception is, however, in relation to the use of expert influence; they seem to place greater reliance on expert power and perceive their chairmen functioning in the same mannor. A second exception is in the use of rewards, particularly in the stress departments; it seems that they are rewarded and (by nature of their contacts and research funding) can use rewards in influencing others.

Another of the limitations of this study is the generalized nature of the influence studied; it is conceivable that the basis of influence would be different for tenured faculty as compared to non-tenured faculty. Tenured faculty might, for instance, be in a more favored position to exert coercive power, e.g., "The chairman knows that I could exert pressure and make his work more difficult." Also the exchange of influence might differ depending upon the area of decision making. That is, different forms of influence might be used depending if educational, financial, or hiring policies were under consideration.

In regard to academic administration, since faculty respondents often indicated that the most important reason for the chairman acting as they wished is "The chairman feels that his job properly includes an obligation to consider and act upon my suggestions as a faculty member" suggests (as might be expected) that faculty members are unlikely to see themselves as subordinates in a hierarchy. Furthermore, the preference among all respondents for influence relationships that avoid reward and coercive powers should be instructive to those holding positions of leadership in academia: it must be clearly understood that reward and coercive powers are viewed as inappropriate and illegitimate bases of influence.

In summation, the results are largely consistent with the hypotheses that served as guides. The situation of stress resulted in responses indicating a different pattern of power bases in the effected departments, thus,

demonstrating the need to examine the structural determinents of behavior. The different pattern of power bases, of course, tells us nothing about cause and effect; that, whether the use of these forms of influence were related to the onset of stress, or resulted from a stressful situation.

The typing of faculty respondents suggests the utility of recognizing personality orientations in conducting research in organizations, and also suggests the need, from the standpoint of leadership, to consider not only situational requirements but the personalities.

Finally, it must be clear that an adequate foundation for making policy recommendations in higher educational administration requires additional research in education, as well as comparisons with administrative studies from other disciplines.

Footnotes

[1] For example:

Logan Wilson. *Academic Man*, Oxford University Press, 1942;

T. Caplow and R. McGee. *The Academic Marketplace*, New York: Basic Books, 1948;

David G. Brown. *The Mobile Professors*, Washington: The American Council on Education, 1967.

Edward Gross and Paul Brambsch. *University Goals and Academic Power*, Washington: The American Council on Education, 1968.

[2] For examples of the instruments of power available to department chairmen see Hill and French (1967). For a full discussion of the concept of influence and different categories of influence than used in this study see Parsons (1963).

[3] Since the primary intent of this study was not to describe "the average faculty member" but to discover relationships among variables, such relationships are likely to appear even if the set of respondents departs from an accurate sample of the population.

[4] For a discussion of the rationale for this kind of analysis, see Tannenbaum and Bachman (1964) and Bachman (1968).

References

(Those mentioned in this paper as well as related others)

Bachman, Jerald G., Smith, C. G., and Slesinger, J. A. "Control, Performance, and Satisfaction: An Analysis of Structural and Individual Effects." Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. 1966. 4, 127-136.

Bachman, Jerald G. "The Way in Which the Organization of College Departments Affects the Performance and Attitudes of College Faculty." Final Research Report to the U.S.O.E. Survey Research Center, University of Michigan, October 1966.

Bachman, Jerald G. "Faculty Satisfaction and the Dean's Influence: An Organizational Study of Twelve Liberal Arts Colleges. Journal of Applied Psychology. 52:1, 1968, 55-61.

Brown, David G. The Mobile Professors. Washington: The American Council on Education, 1967.

Burton R. Clark. "Faculty Culture" The Study of Campus Cultures. Terry F. Lunsford (ed.) W.I.C.H.E. February 1963, 39-54.

Caplow, T. and McGee, R. The Academic Marketplace. New York: Basic Books, 1948.

Dressel, Paul L., Johnson, F. Graig, and Marcus, Philip M. "Departmental Operations: The Confidence Game." Educational Record, Summer, 1969, 274-278.

French, J. R. P., Jr., and Raven, B. "The Bases of Social Power." I. D. Cartwright and A. Zander (eds.) Group Dynamics: Research and Theory. Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson, 1960. pp 607-623.

Gouldner, Alvin W. "Cosmopolitans and Locals: Toward an Analysis of Latent Social Roles." Parts I and II Administrative Science Quarterly 2:281-306, 444-480, December 1957, March 1958.

Gross, Edward and Grambsch, Paul V. University Goals and Academic Power. Washington: American Council on Education, 1968.

Hill, Winston W., French, Wendell L. "Perceptions of the Power of Department Chairmen by Professors." Administrative Science Quarterly 11:4 (March 1967), 548-574.

Katz, Daniel, and Kahn, Robert L. The Social Psychology of Organizations. New York: Wiley, 1966.

Lewis, Lionel S. "On Prestige and Loyalty of University Faculty" Administrative Science Quarterly, March 1967, 629-742.

Mayhew, Lewis B. "Faculty Demands and Faculty Militance," The Journal of Higher Education, 40:5, May 1969, pp. 337-350.

Parsons, Talcott. "On the Concept of Influence," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1963, 27:37-42.

Parsons, Talcott, and Platt, Gerald M. "The American Academic Profession: A Pilot Study." Report of a study supported by the National Science Foundation (GS 513), March 1968.

Tannenbaum, A. S. and Bachman, J. G. "Structural Versus Individual Effects." American Journal of Sociology, 1964, 69, 585-595.

Walker, D. E., and Holmes, D. C. "The University Professor and His Department." The Educational Record, January 1969, 41, 34-36.

Wilson, Logan. Academic Man. Oxford University Press, 1942.

ITEMS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE

Listed below are five reasons generally given by faculty when they are asked why they do the things their chairman suggest or want them to do. Please read all five carefully. Then react to each reason in two different ways:

(1) First, in column A number the reasons according to how it is.

(2) Then, in column B number the reasons according to how you feel it should be.

Give rank "1" to the most important reason, "2" to the next, etc.

A	B	
/_/	/_/	I respect him personally, and want to act in a way that merits his respect and admiration. [Referent]
/_/	/_/	I respect his competence and judgment about things with which he is more experienced than I. [Expert]
/_/	/_/	He can give special help and benefits to those who co-operate with him. [Reward]
/_/	/_/	He can apply pressure or penalize those who do not co-operate. [Coersive]
/_/	/_/	He has a legitimate right, considering his position, to expect that his suggestions will be carried out. [Legitimate]

Now, thinking in the other direction, consider the five statements listed below. Please read all five carefully. Then number them according to what you think is their importance to your department chairman as reasons for doing the things you suggest or request of him.

Give rank "1" to the most important factor, "2" to the next, etc.

/_/	/_/	The chairman feels that his job properly includes an obligation to consider and act upon my suggestions as a faculty member. [Legitimate]
/_/	/_/	The chairman respects me personally, and wants to act in a way that merits my respect and admiration. [Referent]
/_/	/_/	The chairman knows that I could exert pressure and make his work more difficult. [Coersive]
/_/	/_/	The chairman respects my competence and judgment about things with which I am more experienced than he. [Expert]
/_/	/_/	The chairman knows that I can give assistance and support in return for acceptance of my ideas. [Reward]

Rank the three sources below according to the amount of intellectual stimulation you receive from each. Give rank "1" to the most important source, "2" to the next, "3" to the least.

/_/ colleagues here

/_/ other professional associates elsewhere

/_/ periodicals, books, and other publications